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Author(s): Aurelio M. Espinosa, Jr.

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SPANISH-AMERICAN FOLKLORE

AURELIO M. ESPINOSA, JR.

(Stanford University)

Folklorists in the Spanish-American field use the term "folklore" in the broadest possible sense. Any manifestation of folk culture or popular knowledge is considered "folkloric" material.

The folkloric materials that have interested students of Spanish tradition comprise, for the most part, folk tales, folk poetry (chiefly ballads, *décimas*, *coplas*, *alabados*, and nursery rhymes), folk songs, folk music, children's games, folk plays, myths, beliefs and superstitions, proverbs, riddles, customs, crafts, and folk speech.

Of the various Spanish-speaking areas, only two, the New Mexico-Colorado region and Puerto Rico, have been the object of intensive folklore research.

New Mexico-Colorado

The first investigations in the New Mexican field were carried on by A. M. Espinosa, Sr. During the years 1910-1916 he published a number of articles on the Spanish folklore of New Mexico in the *Journal of American Folklore* (I. Myths; II. Superstitions and Beliefs; III. Folk-Tales; IV. Proverbs; V. Popular Comparisons; VI. Los Trovos del viejo Vilmas; VII. More Folk-Tales; VIII. Short Stories and Anecdotes; IX. Riddles; X. Children's Games; XI. Nursery Rhymes; Comparative Notes on New-Mexican and Mexican Spanish Folk-Tales). In 1915 he published a collection of traditional Spanish ballads from New Mexico in the *Revue Hispanique*. His "Studies in New Mexican Spanish," which appeared in the *Revue de Dialectologie Romane* (1909-1914), opened a new epoch in Spanish-American dialectology; the first two parts of this work have been translated into Spanish by the Instituto de Filología, of Buenos Aires, to form part of their *Biblioteca de Dialectología Hispanoamericana* (1930, 1946); Part III, on the English elements, is now being reworked for future publication.

Most of the subsequent work in New Mexico and Colorado has been inspired more or less directly from the studies mentioned above. Important progress has been made in collecting materials, and we now have a fairly definite idea of the Spanish folklore of this region. Besides further articles by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., there are the large folk tale collections of J. M. Espinosa and of Juan B. Rael. Rael's collection, the most important yet gathered in all Spanish America, has not yet been published in its entirety; about one-fourth of the 400 tales it comprises have appeared in the *Journal of American Folklore* (52 [1939], 227-323 and 55 [1942], 1-93).

Folk music and folk poetry have been the subject of intensive study on the part of an active group of folklorists at the University of New Mexico. A. L. Campa, one of the leaders of this group, has recently published an extensive study entitled *Spanish Folk-Poetry in New Mexico* (Albuquerque, 1946). A repository of folk music is now being established at the University; it contains "over 300 . . . records, including photostatic transcription of musical notations," says Dr. Campa.

The late Professor Franz Boas and Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons were greatly interested in the Spanish elements in Indian folklore, and they and their pupils have published important studies in this field; A. M. Espinosa, Sr., has also contributed to this branch of folklore study.

It is interesting to note that genuine folk plays have been preserved in New Mexico, the most popular of these being certain religious plays and the ubiquitous *Moros y Cristianos*. M. R. Cole was the first to publish folk plays of the religious type, versions of *Los Pastores*, from New Mexico and Texas (MAFS, Vol. 9). The University of New Mexico has published a few of similar type, collected by A. L. Campa.

In addition to these folk plays of European origin and setting, two native Spanish folk plays, of American origin and setting, have been preserved: *Los Comanches*, a play composed in the last half of the eighteenth century (published by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., *Bulletin of the University of New Mexico*, 1907), and *Los Tejanos*, a folk play of the middle of the last century describing the defeat of the Texans and the capture of their leader by the New Mexicans in 1841 (published by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., and J. M. Espinosa, *Hispania*, 1944).

The Passion plays and the religious ceremonies of the flagellant societies that still continue their practices in certain parts of Spain and Spanish America have received some attention, but as yet no serious comprehensive study has been devoted to this subject.

As regards folk customs, J. B. Rael has published an interesting article on "New Mexican Spanish Feasts" in the *California Folklore Quarterly*.

In the field of folk speech, the outstanding work is the well-known study by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., cited above ("Studies in New Mexican Spanish"). Besides numerous other articles by the same investigator, further contributions have been made by J. B. Rael and F. M. Kercheville.

In addition to these published materials, a vast amount of folkloric materials awaits publication. A. M. Espinosa, Sr. has a collection of 1500 *coplas populares* from New Mexico.

Professor J. B. Rael has "a great deal of unpublished materials, including some 200 *alabados*, more than 60 religious tunes, about 800 miscellaneous folk poems (*coplas*, *décimas*, ballads, etc.). The folklore collection mentioned above and the religious hymns and their melodies are ready for publication."

Professor A. L. Campa reports the existence of "several unpublished collections and comprehensive files accumulated over years of investigation" at the University of New Mexico. As mentioned above, a large repository of Spanish folk music has been established at the University, and the music and texts are being studied by Dr. Campa and his students. A number of *décimas* have been recorded by Professor Donald Robb, who has also aided in the recording of songs.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico has been an especially fruitful source of folklore materials. Several important folk tale collections have been published: J. Alden Mason and A. M. Espinosa, Sr., "Porto-Rican Folk-Lore: Folk-Tales," in the

Journal of American Folklore (1921-1929), and Ramírez de Arellano, *Folklore portorriqueño*. The latter volume contains also a large collection of riddles. Another collection of 800 riddles was published in the *Journal* in 1916.

Other branches well represented are: Ballads: A. M. Espinosa, Sr., "Romances de Puerto Rico," in *Revue Hispanique* (1918); Folk Poetry: María Cadilla de Martínez, *Poesía popular de Puerto Rico* (Madrid, 1933); an important collection of *décimas* and other forms of folk poetry was published by J. Alden Mason and A. M. Espinosa, Sr. in the *Journal of American Folklore* (1918); Sra. Cadilla de Martínez has published also a study of festivals and customs, *Costumbres y tradicionalismos de mi tierra* (San Juan, 1938). C. Coll y Toste is author of three volumes of legends and traditions, *Leyendas puertorriqueñas* (San Juan, 1924-1925). A collection of proverbs was published in 1920 by Justo D. Barco (*Prontuario ortográfico y paremiológico portorriqueño* (San Germán, P. R.).

Studies on Puerto Rican folk speech are too numerous to mention here; to the items cited by R. S. Boggs in his *Bibliography of Latin American Folklore* (New York, 1940), p. 94, one should add those given by M. W. Nichols in *A Bibliographical Guide to Materials on American Spanish* (Harvard University Press, 1941), pp. 97-98.

In the remaining areas of Spanish tradition much less has been collected. A start has been made in California and Arizona; but in Texas, Louisiana and Florida the results so far are meager.

California

Folk tales, proverbs, ballads, and other forms of folk poetry (including nursery rhymes and *coplas*) have been published by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., in *Hispania* (1940); *California Folklore Quarterly*, 1944; Flügel Memorial Volume (Stanford University, 1916); *Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal* (Madrid, 1925); *Homenaje a Antonio María Alcover* (Mallorca, Spain, 1930). California Spanish riddles have been published in the *California Folklore Quarterly* by the same investigator. Notes on California Spanish are contained in an article by Anita C. Post, "Some Aspects of Arizona Spanish," published in *Hispania* (1933).

Arizona

In Arizona, folklore materials are being collected by a small group at the University of Arizona. Of the published materials, the most important is on folk speech, "Southern Arizona Spanish Phonology," by Anita C. Post, and published by the University of Arizona (1934). Previously Miss Post had published in *Hispania* the article on Arizona Spanish mentioned above. In the first study named, Miss Post published five folk tales. Three more Arizona Spanish folk tales—translated, however, into English—have been published by Calvin Claudel in the *California Folklore Quarterly*.

The most recent contribution to Arizona folklore is a collection of Spanish folk songs from Southern Arizona by Luisa Espinel, *Canciones de mi padre*, published by the University of Arizona (1946).

From the remaining regions little of great merit can be mentioned. Spanish

folk tales from Texas have been published in English, but in such form they are of little use to the professional folklorist. Mexican superstitions and remedies are described in "Manners and Customs of the Border Mexicans" (Publication of the West Texas Historical and Scientific Society, No. 1, 1920).

As regards Louisiana, a group of "Spanish Folktales from Delacroix, Louisiana" has been published (*JAF*, 58 [1945], 209-224). Unfortunately the tales were written in English by school children and in very imperfect form.

From Florida I know only of an article on folk speech by Manuel D. Ramírez, "Some Semantic and Linguistic Notes on the Spanish Spoken in Tampa, Florida," in the *Revista inter-americana* (Vol. I, No. 1, 1939).

It is obvious that with the exception of New Mexico and Puerto Rico, the Spanish-speaking areas still offer a rich and varied field to collectors of folklore.

With regard to the scientific study of the materials collected, although great progress has been made, much still remains to be done. As R. S. Boggs reports, "Too much still has to be done in recording and classifying and making available *accurately* recorded material from *all* over the world with *adequate* background information, to be able to make exhaustive worldwide studies of individual themes (e.g., *Kaiser und Abt*), so well founded laws of folklore evolution can be deduced, before we can have any appreciable basis upon which to evolve theories and interpret historical, literary, etc., values."

It was realized early that Spanish-American materials had to be studied in relation to those from Spain and those from all other parts of the world. In order to increase the materials available from Spain, folklore expeditions were undertaken, primarily to collect folk tales, by A. M. Espinosa, Sr., in 1920-1921, and by the author in 1936. The collection of 280 Spanish folk tales gathered by A. M. Espinosa, Sr. was published by Stanford University Press, 1923-1926, and has appeared in a second edition published by the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Madrid, 1946); two additional volumes, published also by the Consejo (Madrid, 1947), contain an exhaustive comparative study of the tales, following the methods of Bolte-Polívka and the Finnish folklore scholars. All Spanish and Spanish-American versions of the tales concerned are studied fully.

The best and most accepted methods of modern folklore research are those of the so-called Finnish school, represented by Kaarle Krohn (*Die folkloristische Arbeitsmethode* [Cambridge and Oslo], 1926), Walter Anderson, Jan De Vries, *et al.* The classifications of Aarne-Thompson and Archer Taylor, and Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* are, of course, of fundamental importance; it is unfortunate, however, that in the case of the *Motif-Index*, the Spanish and Spanish-American fields have been neglected. Boggs' *Index of Spanish Folktales* deals with the peninsular Spanish versions published before 1930. Thus a gigantic task that awaits folklorists is to incorporate the vast Spanish materials into these indices and classifications.

Among the important contributions to the science of folklore made by scholars trained at Stanford University are: *The Double Invitation in the Legend of Don Juan* by Dorothy Epplen MacKay (Stanford University Press,

1943), and *The Motifs of the Jason and Medea Myth in Modern Tradition*, a doctoral dissertation (1933, unpublished), which is a study of 232 versions. Another doctor's thesis in folklore, *An Interpretation of the Hispanic Folk Hero, Pedro Urdemales*, was prepared by Frank Goodwyn at the University of Texas. In all, more than a score of doctor's and master's theses have been prepared at Stanford University on Spanish and Spanish-American folk themes.

In the field of folk speech, outstanding work has been done on the Spanish language of New Mexico and Arizona; similar studies on the language of the other Spanish-speaking regions would be highly desirable.

In the field of folk music a serious effort has been made to study Mexican folk music in relation to that of Spain (*El romance español y el corrido mexicano*, by Vicente Mendoza, Mexico, 1939), and it is to be hoped that the work being done at the University of New Mexico does not neglect this aspect.

With regard to bibliographies, the Spanish-American field has two excellent ones in book form: R. S. Boggs, *Bibliography of Latin American Folklore* (New York, 1940), which includes Puerto Rico, although not the other Spanish-speaking regions of the United States, and M. W. Nichols, *A Bibliographical Guide to Materials on American Spanish* (Cambridge, 1941). Professor Boggs is continuing his useful work in the March numbers of the *Southern Folklore Quarterly*.

In conclusion, it is clear that much still remains to be done in the field of Spanish-American folklore. First of all, materials should be collected in every branch of folklore, especially in California, Arizona, Texas, Louisiana and Florida. With regard to the collecting, it must be stressed that the materials should be recorded as accurately as possible *in Spanish*; the recent tendency to publish Spanish materials in English must be discontinued, since in such form it can not be utilized by the scientific folklorist.

Secondly, the work of classification and study is almost limitless. As stated above, the materials already published must be classified and incorporated in the various folklore indices. Even now, however, there is an unlimited field for comparative studies similar to those of Espinosa, Sr., Knopp and Eppley, cited above.

Finally, additional material aid must be obtained if research is to be encouraged in this rich and important field. The most desperate need is for a publication outlet; in the writer's opinion there is a real need for a supplement to the *Journal of American Folklore* similar to the long series of *Language Dissertations* published by the Linguistic Society of America.

AFRO-AMERICAN FOLKLORE*

J. MASON BREWER
(Samuel Huston College)

An examination of Negro Folklore in North America reveals the fact that

* Slightly modified, Mr. Brewer's report appeared under the title "Negro Folklore in North America: A Field of Research" in *The New Mexico Quarterly Review* (Vol. 16, Spring, 1946). Permission to reprint is gratefully acknowledged.